

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. **(currently amended):** A method for the treatment ~~or prophylaxis~~ of osteoarthritis, comprising administering orally to a mammal in need thereof a therapeutically effective amount of a sulphated polysaccharide in acid form or as a physiologically acceptable salt thereof, selected from the group consisting of inulin sulphate, gellan sulphate, pullulan sulphate, curdlan sulphate, alginic acid sulphate, laminarin sulphate, and pectin sulphate.
2. **(cancelled).**
3. **(currently amended):** The method according to claim 2~~1~~, wherein the sulphated polysaccharide is inulin sulphate.
4. **(currently amended):** The method according to claim 2~~1~~, wherein the sulphated polysaccharide is gellan sulphate.
5. **(currently amended):** The method according to claim 1, wherein the sulphated polysaccharide is ~~totally or partially~~ salified with an alkaline or alkaline earth metal.
6. **(previously presented):** The method according to claim 5, wherein the alkaline metal is sodium.

7. (previously presented): The method according to claim 6, wherein the sulphated polysaccharide in the form of a sodium salt is inulin sulphate sodium salt.

8. (previously presented): The method according to claim 6, wherein the sulphated polysaccharide in the form of a sodium salt is gellan sulphate sodium salt.

9. (currently amended): The method according to claim 7, wherein the inulin sulphate sodium salt exhibits a degree of sulphation between 25% and 62%, on an anhydrous base.

10. (currently amended): The method according to claim 9, wherein the degree of sulphation is between 55% and 62%, on an anhydrous base.

11. (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the sulphated polysaccharide is partially hydrolysed.

12. (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the sulphated polysaccharide is a polysulphated polysaccharide selected from the group consisting of inulin polysulphate, gellan polysulphate, pullulan polysulphate, curdian polysulphate, alginate polysulphate, laminarin polysulphate, and pectin polysulphate.

13. (cancelled).

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14. (currently amended): The method according to claim ~~13~~12, wherein the polysulphated polysaccharide is inulin polysulphate.

15. (previously presented): The method according to claim 14, wherein the inulin polysulphate is inulin polysulphate sodium salt.

16. (currently amended): The method according to claim ~~13~~12, wherein the polysulphated polysaccharide is gellan polysulphate.

17. (previously presented): The method according to claim 16, wherein the gellan polysulphate is gellan polysulphate sodium salt.

18. (cancelled).

19. (currently amended): A method for the treatment ~~or prophylaxis of~~ osteoarthritis, comprising administering orally to a mammal in need thereof a therapeutically effective amount of a sulphated oligosaccharide in acid form or as a physiologically acceptable salt thereof, derived from a polysaccharide selected from the group consisting of inulin, gellan, pullulan, curdlan, alginic acid, laminarin, and pectin.

20. (previously presented): A method according to claim 19, wherein the sulphated oligosaccharide is derived from inulin.

21. (previously presented): The method according to claim 19, wherein the sulphated oligosaccharide is derived from gellan.

22. (previously presented): The method according to claim 19, wherein the sulphated oligosaccharide is a polysulphated oligosaccharide.

23. (currently amended): A method for the treatment or prophylaxis of osteoarthritis, comprising administering orally to a mammal in need thereof a therapeutically effective amount of a sulphated oligosaccharide in acid form or as a physiologically acceptable salt thereof, produced by chemical synthesis, whose structure corresponds to a portion of the structure of is derived from a sulphated polysaccharide selected from the group consisting of inulin sulphate, gellan sulphate, pullulan sulphate, curdlan sulphate, alginic acid sulphate, laminarin sulphate, and pectin sulphate.

24-25. (cancelled).

26. (new): A method for the prophylaxis of osteoarthritis, comprising administering orally to a mammal in need thereof a therapeutically effective amount of inulin polysulphate in acid form or as a physiologically acceptable salt thereof.

27. (new): The method according to claim 26, wherein the inulin polysulphate is inulin polysulphate sodium salt.